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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4990

S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 008889

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/13/07
TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [ET](#)
SUBJECT: DESIGNATION OF AL'ITTIHAD AS A FOREIGN
TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

REF: A) ADDIS ABABA 8866
B) STATE 194218
C) ADDIS ABABA 7920
D) STATE 191813
E) 96 ADDIS ABABA 06142

CLASSIFIED BY DCM MARTIN G. BRENNAN. REASONS: 1.5(B),
(C) AND (D)

11. (S) EMBASSY APPRECIATES THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE (REF B) TO OUR QUERY AS TO WHY AL'ITTIHAD AL ISLAMIA WAS NOT DESIGNATED A FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATION. THE DEPARTMENT NOTED THE THREE CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION OF A TERRORIST GROUP: A FOREIGN ORGANIZATION THAT ENGAGES IN TERRORIST ACTIVITY AND THREATENS THE SECURITY OF UNITED STATES NATIONALS OR THE NATIONAL SECURITY OF THE UNITED STATES.

12. (S) WE BELIEVE THAT AL'ITTIHAD MEETS THESE CRITERIA AND SHOULD BE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED FOR DESIGNATION AS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION. AL'ITTIHAD HAS ESTABLISHED AN EXTENSIVE RECORD OF TERRORIST ACTIVITIES IN ETHIOPIA. ETHIOPIAN AUTHORITIES HAVE CREDIBLY IMPLICATED AL'ITTIHAD IN THE JANUARY 1996 BOMBING OF THE GHION HOTEL, THE JULY 1996 ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT AGAINST MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS ABDUL-MEJID AND THE AUGUST 1996 BOMBING OF THE WABE SHEBELLE HOTEL IN ADDIS ABABA. THESE INCIDENTS RESULTED IN INDIVIDUALS KILLED AND WOUNDED INCLUDING FOREIGNERS. INDEED, FOREIGNERS FREQUENT THOSE AREAS OF THE GHION AND WABE SHEBELLE HOTELS WHERE THE BOMBS WENT OFF. THE EMBASSY HAD REASON TO SUSPECT THAT THE THREAT AGAINST THE LIFE OF AMBASSADOR SHINN ON JULY 14, 1996 (REF E) COULD HAVE BEEN LINKED TO AL'ITTIHAD. WE ALSO CALL THE DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION TO RECENT ROAL REPORTS (TD314/18683-97 AND TD314/09508-97) WHICH INDICATE THAT AL'ITTIHAD WAS INVOLVED IN THE TRAINING/LOGISTICS OF HIT SQUADS THAT WERE TO INFILTRATE URBAN CENTERS OF ETHIOPIA TO ATTACK GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND FOREIGNERS.

13. (S) REPORTING FROM EMBASSY NAIROBI AS WELL AS THIS EMBASSY INDICATES THAT AL'ITTIHAD IS MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO UNDERMINE ATTEMPTS AT ACHIEVING PEACE AND A SEMBLANCE OF GOVERNANCE IN SOMALIA. THERE ARE ALSO CREDIBLE REPORTS THAT AL'ITTIHAD IS INVOLVED IN DRUG SMUGGLING TO FINANCE ITS ACTIVITIES. DOCUMENTS SEIZED BY ETHIOPIAN FORCES DURING AN AUGUST 1996 ATTACK ON AN AL'ITTIHAD BASE AT LUUQ IN SOMALIA CLEARLY INDICATE THAT AL'ITTIHAD RECRUITS WERE RECEIVING TRAINING FROM AFGHAN ARABS AMONG OTHERS WITH LINKS TO IRAN AND SUDAN. AL'ITTIHAD IS CLEARLY ACTIVELY ENGAGED WITH ELEMENTS LINKED TO SAUDI TERRORIST USMANA BIN LADEN.

14. (S) BASED ON INDICATIONS RECEIVED TO DATE, AL'ITTIHAD IS DEDICATED TO DESTABILIZING EASTERN ETHIOPIA AND UNDERMINING THE GOVERNMENT OF ETHIOPIA AS WELL. IF AL'ITTIHAD WERE TO CONSOLIDATE ITS POSITION IN SOMALIA, THERE IS NO DOUBT IN OUR MINDS THAT IT WOULD EXPORT ITS BRAND OF TERRORISM AND POLITICAL ISLAM TO OTHER COUNTRIES IN REGION. THIS REPRESENTS A THREAT TO U.S. INTERESTS IN THE REGION AND A DIRECT THREAT TO AMERICANS.

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